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## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO HIGHLIGHT PANAMA'S GROWING ROLE IN GLOBAL TRADE AND LOGISTICS

*Competitive Economy, Policies & Infrastructure Drawing Multinational Regional Operations*

On Thursday, February 24, the Republic of Panama will join the Americas Society/Council of the Americas (AS/COA) and the World Bank to host "Panama: Where the World Meets," an international conference featuring senior government officials, international business executives and leading analysts to discuss Panama's emergence as a global center of trade and international logistics.

The event will be held at the Panama Marriott Hotel in Panama City from 8:30am-3:45pm and can be followed live through webcast, blogging and Twitter by visiting [www.meetpanama.com.pa](http://www.meetpanama.com.pa) and clicking on the event logo.

Confirmed speakers at the event include:

- **Ricardo Martinelli**, President of Panama
- **Demetrio Papadimitriu**, Minister of the Presidency, Panama
- **Alberto Vallarino**, Minister of Finance and Economy, Panama
- **Roberto Henríquez**, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Panama
- **Alberto Alemán Zubieta**, CEO, Panama Canal Authority
- **Edgar Blanco**, Research Director, Center for Transportation and Logistics, MIT
- **Alberto Gómez Alcalá**, Executive Director of Economic Research and Communications, Citi Latin America
- **Tanya Avellán**, Director, Central America, Coca-Cola FEMSA
- **Frank Heemskerk**, Member of the Board of Management, Royal Haskoning
- **Samuel Israel**, CEO, Latin America, DHL Global Forwarding
- **Felipe Jaramillo**, Central America Director, The World Bank
- **Rubén Ramírez**, Representative Director, Panama, CAF
- **Don Ratliff**, Executive Director, Georgia Tech Panama Logistics, Innovation & Research Center
- **Stefan J. Roehr**, Director, Latin America Supply Chain, Sanofi-Aventis
- **Jordan Schwartz**, Lead Infrastructure Economist, Latin America and the Caribbean, The World Bank
- **Peter V.A. Shaw**, Regional Credit Officer for Latin America, Fitch Ratings
- **Carlos Urriola**, General Manager Manzanillo International Terminal and Senior Vice President, Stevedoring Services of America
- **Philip Yeo**, Chairman, SPRING Singapore, Special Adviser for Economic Development, Prime Minister's Office
- **Susan Segal**, President and CEO, Americas Society and Council of the Americas

**Demetrio Papadimitriu**, Minister of the Presidency of the Republic of Panama highlighted the conference's focus, saying "Panama already boasts a financial infrastructure system that is among the best in the world and a physical infrastructure system that is among the best in Latin America. President Ricardo Martinelli's

administration is undertaking a carefully focused and financed 5-year, \$20 billion investment plan that will further position the country as an unparalleled trade and logistics center. This event will offer business executives and international investors valuable insight from leading government and industry leaders about how these investments will impact Panama's present and future as a dynamic modern economy and why it is becoming more attractive for multinational companies to establish their regional operations here."

**Susan Segal, president and CEO of the Americas Society/Council of the Americas** described the upcoming event by saying, "It's exciting to go back to Panama and host our Latin American Cities conference with the government of Panama and the World Bank. Panama has proven to be a success story in Latin America and is fast becoming a world hub for foreign investors to expand. With its reputation for being a business-friendly country for investors and its continuing investment in logistics, Panama is on track for becoming one of the region's fastest growing economies. At this year's conference we have speakers from Holland and Singapore talking about what lessons it can learn to become a regional hub and leaders in logistics and as well as how Panama plans to be more competitive in this 'new decade of Latin America.' Of course, the country's success reaches beyond its borders as U.S businesses are benefiting from the Panama Canal expansion project and are building partnerships to make it a state-of-the-art facility for people all over the world to enjoy."

**Felipe Jaramillo, World Bank Director for Central America** explained "This is Panama's moment. Backed by a dynamic economy, the country is registering solid economic growth, leading the way in the region. The decisions to double the capacity of the Panama Canal and initiate major public investment projects will continue to attract local and foreign investors who see Panama's potential as a world-class international logistics hub. We will continue to support efforts to improve competitiveness and the business environment to achieve sustainable growth with opportunities for all. This Latin American Cities conference, co-hosted by the Council of the Americas, the Government of Panama and the World Bank is an exciting opportunity to showcase what Panama offers to the world."

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